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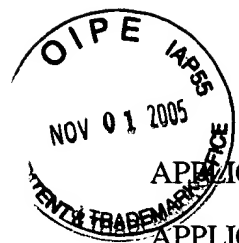
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<b>TRANSMITTAL FORM</b> <i>(to be used for all correspondence during pendency of filed application)</i>	Application Number	09/635,345	
	Filing Date	August 9, 2000	
	First Named Inventor	Albert K. Chin	
	Group Art Unit Number	3738	
	Examiner Name	Thomas C. Barrett	
Total Number of Pages in This Submission	5	Attorney Docket Number	80121-07179

ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)	
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REMARKS:	

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OR AGENT			
Signature:	<i>Albert C. Smith</i>		
Attorney/Reg. No.:	Albert C. Smith; Reg. No.: 20,355	Dated:	10/27/05

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I hereby certify that this correspondence, including the enclosures identified above, is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below. If the Express Mail Mailing Number is filled in below, then this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service pursuant to 37 CFR 1.10.			
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Albert K. Chin  
APPLICATION NO.: 09/635,345  
FILING DATE: August 9, 2000  
TITLE: Apparatus and Methods for Subxiphoid Endoscopic Access  
EXAMINER: Thomas C. Barrett  
GROUP ART UNIT: 3738  
ATTY. DKT. NO.: 80121-07179

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Dated: 10/27/05 By: A. C. Smith  
Albert C. Smith; Reg. No.: 20,355

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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**  
**Under 37 CFR §§ 1.56 and 1.97-98**

SIR:

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 CFR §§ 1.56 and 1.97-98, enclosed herewith is modified form PTO/SB/08A listing references for consideration by the Examiner.

The filing of this Information Disclosure Statement shall not be construed as a representation regarding the completeness of the list of references, or that inclusion of a reference in this list is an admission that it is prior art or is pertinent to this application, or that a search has been made, or as an admission that the information listed is, or may be considered to be, material to patentability, or that no other material information exists, and shall not be construed as an admission against interest in any manner.

This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed:

- ☐ within three months of the filing date of the application, or date of entry into the national stage of an international application, or before the mailing date of a first office action on the merits, whichever event last occurred;
- ☐ before the mailing of a first official action after the filing of a request for continued examination (RCE) under 37 CFR § 1.114;

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- ☒ after three months of the filing date of this national application or the date of entry of the national stage in an international application, or after the mailing date of the first official action on the merits, whichever event last occurred, but before the mailing date of the first to occur of either: (1) a final action under 37 CFR §1.113; or (2) an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, and:
- ☐ attached hereto is the fee set forth under 37 CFR §1.17(p) for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR. § 1.97(c); OR
  - ☒ Applicant certifies pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.97(e) that:
    - ☐ each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement; OR
    - ☒ no item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application and, to the knowledge of the person signing this certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in this Statement was known to any individual designated under 37 CFR § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement;
- ☐ on or before the payment of the issue fee but after the mailing date of the first to occur of either: (1) a final action under 37 CFR § 1.113; (2) a notice of allowance under 37 CFR § 1.311; or (3) an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, and:
- ☐ Applicant certifies pursuant to 37 CFR. § 1.97(e) that:
    - ☐ each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement;
    - ☐ no item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application and, to the knowledge of the person signing this certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained

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in this Statement was known to any individual designated under 37 CFR § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement; AND

- ☐ attached hereto is the fee set forth under 37 CFR §1.17(p) for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR. § 1.97(d); OR
- ☐ after the payment of the issue fee. Applicant requests that the information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement be placed in the file according to 37 CFR § 1.97(i), although the information may not be considered by the USPTO.
- ☐ Enclosed is a copy of each listed reference that may be material to the examination of this application, and for which there may be a duty to disclose.
- ☐ This application relies, under 35 U.S.C. § 120, on the earlier filing date of prior application No. \_\_\_\_\_, filed on \_\_\_\_\_, and the references cited therein are hereby referenced, but are not required to be provided in this application under 37 CFR § 1.98(d).
- ☒ This application was filed after June 30, 2003. Therefore, pursuant to the waiver of the requirements under 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2)(1), copies of each U.S. Patent and each U.S. Patent Application Publication are not required to be submitted. Copies of any foreign patent documents and non-patent literature cited herein are enclosed.
- ☐ Each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart application, and the communication was not received by any individual designated in 37 CFR § 1.56(c) more than thirty days prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement. 37 CFR § 1.704(d).
- ☒ Applicant submits that no fee is required for the consideration of this Information Disclosure Statement.

Consideration of the listed references and favorable action are solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
ALBERT K. CHIN

Dated: 10/27/05

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Substitute for form 1449A/PTO				Complete if Known	
<b>INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT</b>				Application No.	09/635,345
				Filing Date	August 9, 2000
				First Named Inventor	Albert K. Chin
				Art Unit	3738
				Examiner Name	Thomas C. Barrett
Sheet	1	of	1	Attorney Docket Number	80121-07179

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS				
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Document No. Number – Kind Code <sup>2</sup> (if known)	Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document
	A1	US-6,835,193 B2	12-28-2004	Epstein et al.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS					
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Foreign Patent Document Country Code <sup>3</sup> – Number <sup>4</sup> Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known)	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	T <sup>6</sup>

OTHER REFERENCES – NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS				
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published	T <sup>6</sup>	

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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\*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609.

Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

<sup>1</sup>Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). <sup>2</sup>See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov) or MPEP 901.04. <sup>3</sup>Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). <sup>4</sup>For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. <sup>5</sup>Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST. 16 if possible. <sup>6</sup>Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.